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Recreation Commission Minutes 12/09/2008

Park and Recreation Commission

Minutes

Tuesday, December 9, 2008

Approved

The Park and Recreation Commission came to order at 7:00 PM on the first floor of the Arlington Senior Center on Tuesday, December 9, 2008.

Members in attendance included: Leslie Mayer, Don Vitters and Jen Rothenberg. Also in attendance was Director of Recreation Joseph Connelly. Commissioner Nancy Campbell arrived at 8:10 PM.

Members of the public included: Paolo Marinelli and David Stoff

Approval of Minutes

The Park and Recreation Commission reviewed the minutes of November 18, 2008. Ms. Rothenberg and Ms. Mayer amended the minutes. Ms. Rothenberg motioned to approve the minutes as amended. Not having three members present who were at the last meeting the minutes were tabled.

McClennen Park Turnover Issues/Concerns

Mr. Connelly reviewed his meeting with Mr. O'Brien and Mr. Bean regarding the punch list of items outlined by the Commission. Mr. Connelly stated that Mr. Bean believed that most of these issues were DPW long-term maintenance issues.

- Turf Quality – This area would be placed in the current turf maintenance program. Football Posts – Discussed whether or not they are needed. Establishing the need we are requesting they be repaired.
- Grading of Playing Fields – Not much can be done at this point. Recommend changing the orientation of the lining of the fields.
- Skateboard Park – Mr. O'Brien is looking into having all items permanently installed. Mr. Connelly stated that the current signage covers liability. Ms. Rothenberg and Mr. Connelly discussed the improper use of the facility by younger children and individuals with bikes and scooters.
- Baseball Field Dimensions – Nothing can be done at this point and time.
- Health and Maintenance of Existing Plantings – This will fall under the DPW. No longer covered under any warranty.
- Detention Pond Maintenance – Mr. O'Brien did state that there was a maintenance plan that would be handed over to Natural Resources. Mr. Connelly stated that Mr. Bean agreed a safety gate should be installed at the inlet and outlet areas.
- Playground Access – Mr. Bean did not see a problem with installing a path from the playground to the picnic area.
- Pathway Drainage – Mr. Connelly explained that the largest issues seemed to be with the swales along the pathway. Mr.

Connelly stated that both Mr. Bean and Mr. O'Brien were looking into possible solution for this issue.

Ms. Mayer asked that a written follow-up be provided to the Commission from Mr. O'Brien and Mr. Bean. Mr. Connelly will request that information.

Bishop Field Concerns

Mr. Connelly and Ms. Mayer reviewed the issues with the abutters at Bishop Field. Ms. Mayer described the problem with baseballs going over the fence into the abutter's yards and hitting their houses. Mr. Connelly stated that Ms. Mayer and he did meet with Mr. Pine at the site to discuss the issue. Mr. Connelly explained that signage was installed on the fencing and a temporary fence was installed in the outfield area to try to change the desired location of play. Mr. Connelly further explained that the distance from home plate in the diamond to the fence is almost 300'. Mr. Connelly also explained that the permitted play was girl's youth softball and freshman high school softball. The Commission agreed that the next step should be a meeting on site between the abutters and Mr. Connelly, Ms. Mayer, Ms. Rowe and a representative from the Police Department.

Rink/Recreation Update

Recreation –Mr. Connelly was proud to announce that the winter program guide was on-line and would be mailed out next week. Mr. Connelly reviewed the "Arlington Rocks" event that is being co-sponsored with the Arlington Boys and Girls Club and Fidelity House. Ms. Mayer shared a program idea called "Calls from Santa". Mr. Connelly stated that this is something the department could easily offer next season.

Rink – Mr. Connelly reviewed a recent correspondence complimenting the cleanliness of the ice rink. Mr. Connelly introduced Mr. Cunningham to review current rink procedures.

Special Events

There are no special events at this time.

Capital Plan Review

Mr. Connelly reviewed the multi-year capital plan with the Commission. Mr. Connelly stated that the rink was in need of capital funds and in order to keep the user fees from increasing dramatically he was requesting that the Commission push back their field/park requests for FY 2011 and insert \$500,000 for the ice rink. The Commission discussed how this would push back their current field project but agreed the need for this expenditure was real. Ms. Mayer asked how the project could be timed so that the design time and construction time could be minimized. Mr. Connelly stated that he would talk to Mr. Gilligan about the options. Mr. Vitters stated that there would be a need of about 5 months to complete a project of this nature.

Ms. Mayer asked if the feasibility study should be put on hold if this was the new direction of the Commission. Mr. Connelly stated that he believed the study should continue to retrieve the information for potential future projects. Mr. Vitters stated that this could be a phase 1 and that future phases may be able to use the feasibility study information.

Mr. Connelly will discuss options with Ms. Galkowski and Mr. Gilligan and report back to the Commission.

Capital Update

Arlington Sport Complex – Mr. Connelly reviewed the current capital requests and the timing of the rink feasibility study. Mr. Connelly will speak with Sasaki representatives about providing an update on the study to the Commission at the January meeting.

Buzzell Field –Mr. Connelly stated that the fence was removed due to expense and spring opening timing. Mr. Connelly also stated that the contractor would be back in the early spring for an additional weed and feed treatment.

Thorndike Parking – Mr. Connelly reviewed the public hearing results and stated that the next step was to review Mr. Warner's budget estimates and then make a recommendation to the Redevelopment Board for a final plan. Mr. Connelly stated that he was meeting with TAC in January to review their recommendations.

Pheasant Ave. – Mr. Connelly stated that the playground was 99.9 % completed and the remaining item to be fixed was the step handrails.

Handicap Access – Ms. Mayer stated that the Board of Selectmen reviewed her letter and approved the action of creating handicapped parking spaces at the requested park street entrances with input from public safety on specific locations.

Committee Updates

Green Dog Committee – Ms. Mayer reviewed the first of the second round of public hearings and explained that two additional meetings would be taking place prior to a series of meetings to refine the current proposal.

Restrooms in Parks Committee – Ms. Rothenberg stated that this group would be meeting with the Friends of Parks group.

Open Space – Ms. Mayer stated that the Committee was updating its management plans.

Correspondence

Ms. Aikenhead – Mr. Connelly reviewed the memo from Ms. Aikenhead concerning the Thorndike Field Project.

Mr. Wittman – Mr. Connelly reviewed the e-mail from Mr. Wittman concerning the non-resident daily pass fees at the Reservoir.

Ms. Glushko – Ms. Mayer reviewed the request from the Arlington Bike Advisory Committee to install bicycle racks at Menotomy Rocks and Robbins Farm. The Commission discussed meeting member of the Arlington Bike Advisory Committee at both sites to determine location and model type.

Minutes

With Ms. Campbell present Ms. Mayer reviewed the minutes of November 18, 2008. Ms. Rothenberg motioned to approve as amended, seconded by Ms. Campbell and approved 3-0-1 with Mr. Vitters abstaining.

Ms. Rothenberg motioned to adjourn, seconded by Ms. Campbell and approved 4-0. Meeting adjourned at 9:15 PM.

Respectively Submitted:

Joseph Connelly, Director of Recreation